

Dear Co-chairs Formica and Osten,

My name is Jennifer Desillier-Fleming; I am a resident of Groton and I am immensely concerned about Governor Malloy's proposed education budget for 2018-2019. As a mother, teacher, and proponent of public education, Malloy's drastic cuts will only serve to diminish the quality of education in Connecticut. I am against this budget.

The updated education cost sharing formula that was used to create this budget is flawed. By using a formula that relies heavily on data such as students on Husky/Medicaid and student enrollment, towns that are outliers are completely devastated. My town of Groton is home of the Sub Base, meaning our school system educates these military members' kids. Since these students aren't part of the Husky/Medicaid data due to being on federal health insurance, our numbers are in skewed. Of the estimated 1,100 military students that attended Groton schools, 40% (440 students) fall below the poverty line and are receiving free or reduced lunch. Malloy's ECS completely overlooks this and is costing our town 14 million dollars. If these cuts go through, the taxes in our town will increase up to 20%, that will force my family out of the town and possibly out of the profession I love.

One way to help the education budget would be to eliminate the standardized Smarter Balanced tests (SBAC). These tests were rolled out before getting everyone on board with Common Core and are costing towns between \$49 - \$150 per student. In our neighbor state of Massachusetts they eliminated the PARCC assessment in favor of returning to the MCAS (state test). This test costs approximately \$7 per student.

I have always been proud to be a teacher in CT, a state many look to as leaders in education, but with these sweeping cuts that will all change. For the future of our children we must find better ways to budget for education.

Thank you,

Jennifer Desillier-Fleming

Groton resident and middle school teacher in Montville